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Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 11368

COPENHAGEN FOR AMBASSADOR STRAUSS

DEPT PASS STR ELECTRONICALLY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR ETRD MTN FR
SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON NEW GOF MINISTER
OF FOREIGN TRADE - JEAN-FRANCOIS DENIAU

1. AS REQUESTED BY AMBASSADOR WOLFF, THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS SUMMARIZE BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON JEAN-FRANCOIS DENIAU. ON APRIL 5, DENIAU WAS APPOINTED MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE IN P.M. BARRE'S NEW GOVERNMENT, REPLACING ANDRE ROSSI. DENIAU HAD BEEN SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (NUMBER TWO AT THE QUAI UNDER DE GUIRINGAUD) IN THE OUTGOING GOVERNMENT--A POST HE HAD OCCUPIED SINCE AUTUMN 1977.

2. DENIAU JOINED THE INDEPENDENT REPUBLICAN PARTY IN 1975. HE IS A MODEL GISCARDIAN: RICH, TALENTED, AND URBANE. A PERSONAL FRIEND OF GISCARD'S, THE PRESIDENT IN 1976 BUMPED A CAREER DIPLOMAT TO APPOINT DENIAU AS AMBASSADOR TO MADRID, THUS CAUSING A MINOR "INCIDENT DIPLOMATIQUE". THE AFFECTED CAREER DIPLOMAT, JEAN-
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CLAUDE WINKLER, HAD ALREADY PAID HIS FAREWELL CALLS IN BUENOS AIRES AND WAS SET TO MOVE TO MADRID. DENIAU IS A FORMER GAULLIST; IN 1968 HE RAN FOR DEPUTY UNDER THE UDR LABEL AGAINST PIERRE SUDREAU, WHO DEFEATED HIM.

3. DENIAU IS A CAREER CIVIL SERVANT (INSPECTEUR DES FINANCES), EXPERIENCED IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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AND NEGOTIATING. HE IS AN ENA GRADUATE, AND HAS SPENT MOST OF HIS CAREER CONCERNED WITH THE PROBLEMS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. FROM 1958 TO 1959, HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE FRENCH OECD DELEGATION. FROM 1959 TO 1963, HE WAS IN CHARGE OF NEGOTIATING WITH COUNTRIES SEEKING ADMISSION TO THE EC. THE YOUNGEST OF SOME 40 EC COMMISSION DIRECTORS, HE LED THE COMMUNITY TEAM DURING THE UK ENTRY NEGOTIATIONS FROM 1961 TO 1963.

4. AFTER THE UNSUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS, DENIAU FELL INTO DISFAVOR WITH GENERAL DE GAULLE, WHO DISAPPROVED OF HIS WARM ADVOCACY OF UK ENTRY, AND HE WAS EXILED AS AMBASSADOR TO MAURITANIA UNTIL 1966. IN 1967, DENIAU RETURNED TO PARIS FOR BRIEF STINTS IN CHARGE OF INTER-MINISTERIAL COORDINATION ON THE SECAM COLOR TV PROCESS AND AS PRESIDENT OF THE FRANCO-SOVIET MIXED COMMISSION. LATER THE SAME YEAR, HE BECAME A MEMBER OF THE EC COMMISSION WHERE HE WAS IN CHARGE OF SUCCESSFULLY NEGOTIATING THE ENTRY OF THE UK, IRELAND, AND DENMARK INTO THE COMMUNITY. HE ALSO DEVELOPED POLICY GUIDELINES FOR EC AFRICAN RELATIONS.

5. IN APRIL 1973, DENIAU ENTERED THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE FIRST TIME AS SECRETARY OF STATE TO FOREIGN MINISTER MICHEL JOBERT. HE WAS PLACED IN CHARGE OF CONFIDENTIAL

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ASSISTANCE TO THE SUB-SAHARAN FRANCOPHONE STATES. TEN MONTHS LATER, HE WAS NAMED SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE. DURING THE ILLNESS OF AGRICULTURE MINISTER RAYMOND MARCELLIN, DENIAU SUCCESSFULLY CONDUCTED AGRICULTURAL PRICE NEGOTIATIONS IN BRUSSELS. HE WAS RECALLED TO THE AGRICULTURE MINISTRY IN 1975 UNDER CHRISTIAN BONNET WHO EVIDENTLY NEEDED HIS EXPERTISE, AND HE REMAINED THERE UNTIL JUST BEFORE HIS APPOINTMENT TO MADRID IN 1976.

6. DENIAU SPEAKS GOOD ENGLISH, HAS FREQUENTLY VISITED THE U.S., AND HAS DEVELOPED NUMEROUS U.S. CONTACTS OVER THE YEARS. AMERICAN OFFICIALS WHO HAVE WORKED WITH HIM CONSIDER HIM AMBITIOUS, VERY INTELLIGENT, AND A SKILLED AND TOUGH NEGOTIATOR, ALTHOUGH SOMEWHAT SHY IN PERSONAL MANNERS. DENIAU'S OLDER BROTHER XAVIER IS A FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR OVERSEAS TERRITORIES. HARTMAN

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